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# SVETLANA'S DRAMATIC STORY

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## SVETLANA'S DRAMATIC STORY

# Stalin Daughter's

# Escape Almost Fails

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Last April 21 Svetlana Alliluyeva, daughter of Joseph Stalin, arrived in the United States to claim asylum after an odyssey that began in India in February.

This is the first of a series of chapters excerpted from "Svetlana: The Incredible Story of Stalin's Daughter" by Martin Ebon. The book has just been published by New American Library.

Ebon, author and lecturer on Communist history and tactics, is a faculty member at the New School for Social Research.

By Martin Ebon

Clutching her suitcase with one hand and pushing through the revolving door with the other, Svetlana Alliluyeva Stalin, the daughter of Joseph Stalin, entered the United States Embassy in New Delhi. The Marine sergeant at the reception desk was directing two messengers, who were making entries in the day book recording incoming and outgoing documents.

When, without a word, Mrs. Alliluyeva handed him her Soviet passport, the marine at first placed it quietly on his desk, face down. As soon as the messengers had left, he picked up the passport and asked whether he could be of help.

"I am a Soviet citizen," Svetlana said, "and I would like to speak with someone from the American Embassy."

Svetlana sat in a room adjacent to the reception hall and waited. The consul, George O. Huey, was summoned to the embassy. He received Mrs. Alliluyeva in his office, and when she had identified herself and told him she did not wish to return to Russia, Huey telephoned Ambassador Chester Bowles, who was ill and confined to his bed. Meanwhile, Svetlana was given a chance to rest in the office of the first secretary of the embassy, Joseph Greene.

### A Diplomatic Choice

On Bowles's instructions, Huey was joined by other embassy officials. They interviewed Svetlana, getting details on her trip from Moscow to India, and contacted the State Department for information and instructions. They had to make a choice between quick action and diplomatic caution. Was this really Stalin's daughter? She could be an impostor, a Russian propaganda trick—even some other refugee with a mental aberration.

Ambassador Bowles made the affirmative interim decision, in answer to Svetlana's request for protection and help in arranging her departure. Technically, she did not ask for "asylum" in the United States. This would have required U.S. authorities to advise the Indian government of her request, whether or not they planned to grant it.

The embassy's decision, in quick consultation with the State Department in Washington, was to give Stalin's daughter time to make firm plans for her future, but in an atmosphere outside all possible pressure. Bowles instructed a Russian-

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